



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
STATE OF MISSOURI  
JEFFERSON CITY  
65101

MATT BLUNT  
GOVERNOR

STATE CAPITOL  
ROOM 216  
(573) 751-3222

September 9, 2005

Dear

It is my understanding that Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich recently sent letters to a number of Missouri's top research scientists indicating that our state has a less than friendly environment for scientific discovery and that scientists should therefore consider relocating to the state of Illinois. While I am not sure my interpretation of Governor Blagojevich's letter represents the spirit in which it was intended, I certainly viewed it as a compliment to Missouri's life sciences industry and, in particular, our research community.

As a follow on to that letter I wanted to personally thank you for the excellent work you are doing in Missouri and also reassure you that the Illinois Governor's allegations are unfounded. While I would hesitate to speculate as to the adequacy or inadequacy of another state's scientific environment, I am happy to reiterate what I tell people on an almost daily basis: one of my top priorities as Governor of Missouri is to grow our economy and no sector of our economy is as ripe for growth as the life sciences. Accordingly, I am wholly committed to ensuring that Missouri maintains an environment that not only fosters but also attracts responsible and innovative scientific research.

While there is always more to be done, Missouri has a number of strengths of which we can be proud. As a result of our commitment to the life sciences, we have a world class environment with some of the most magnificent research facilities in the world. Washington University is a leading National Institute of Health (NIH) and National Science Foundation (NSF) institution with nearly \$450 million in annual research contracts; the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center is perhaps the premier plant science center in the country; the Stowers Institute for Medical Research has enormous promise



as a national leader in human health research; and the University of Missouri, with its new \$60 million Life Sciences Center, is attracting more NSF funds for plant genetics than any other institution in the country. The science being carried out at these institutions places Missouri in a unique position as a leader in all three segments of the life sciences: human health, veterinary medicine, and plant sciences.

Missouri's life science business climate is also flourishing. According to the Missouri Department of Economic Development, the life sciences contribute \$24 billion to Missouri's economy, with an annual payroll of \$7.6 billion. Many of our life science companies, such as Monsanto, are already major players in the industry, but our aggressive efforts to incubate, grow, and attract entrepreneurial science is unsurpassed and will no doubt lead to many more major companies in our state. Our central geographic location, highly skilled and productive workforce, excellent quality of life, attractive business climate, low tax burden, and commitment to cutting edge research and science makes Missouri the right place to do the business of life sciences.

For my part, I have consistently opposed the prohibition and criminalization of Somatic Cell Nuclear Transfer (SCNT). I have also begun a thoughtful dialogue with a number of leading scientists regarding the most intelligent ways in which state government can assist in growing Missouri's research and commercialization capacity. In fact, the inaugural meeting of my Governor's Advisory Council for Plant Biotechnology meets next Tuesday in St. Louis. We plan to discuss Missouri's research and commercialization assets as well as potential state policies that could further our shared vision for scientific discovery and economic opportunity in this important industry.

Everywhere you look in Missouri, promising research discoveries and new technologies are being found that will bring revolutionary improvements to our food supply, protect our environment, and provide new medical treatments. I want every company, scientist, and researcher that is committed to doing world class work in this field to know that Missouri has a world class life sciences environment waiting for them. Once again, thank you for your important contribution to our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Blunt". The signature is stylized, with a large, looped "M" and a cursive "Blunt".

Matt Blunt